

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Examiner's allowance of claims 1-15 and the Examiner's indication of the allowability of the subject matter of claims 22 and 29 are respectfully acknowledged.

Claims 22 and 29, however, have not been rewritten in independent form at this time since, as set forth in detail hereinbelow, it is respectfully submitted that their respective parent claims also recite allowable subject matter.

THE SPECIFICATION

The specification has been amended to refer to reference numeral 104, as required by the Examiner, as well as to correct a minor typographical error. No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the specification be approved and entered, and that the objection to the drawings under 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5) be withdrawn.

THE DRAWINGS

Figures 19 and 20 have been amended as indicated on the accompanying Annotated Sheet Showing Changes to be labeled as

Prior Art, as required by the Examiner. And submitted herewith is a corrected Replacement Sheet of formal drawing which incorporates the amendments.

As pointed out hereinabove, moreover, the specification has been amended to refer to reference numeral 104 shown in Fig. 20, so as to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5).

Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner's objections to the drawings be withdrawn.

THE CLAIMS

Claim 7 has been amended to make a minor grammatical improvement. Clearly, the amendment to claim 7 is clerical in nature only and is not related to patentability and does not narrow the scope of claim 7 either literally or under the doctrine of equivalents. And it is respectfully requested that the amendment to claim 7 be approved and entered.

THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 16-21 and 23-28 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by USP 5,325,148 ("Katagiri et al"). This rejection, however, is respectfully traversed.

Claim 16 recites an electromagnetic drive for controlling an amount of light of a luminous flux that comprises a plurality of solenoids having coils whose winding axes lie perpendicular to a

direction of the luminous flux; a movable plunger that is movable along one of the winding axes by a magnetic force of the solenoid; and a blade member driven by the movable plunger for controlling the amount of light of the luminous flux.

Similarly, claim 23 recites an electromagnetic drive for controlling an amount of light of a luminous flux comprising a plurality of solenoids having respective center axes corresponding to respective different lines; a movable plunger that is movable along one of the center axes of the plurality of solenoids by a magnetic force of the plurality of solenoids; and a yoke member for forming magnetic fluxes generated from the plurality of solenoids into a loop.

Significantly, since the electromagnetic drive of the present invention as recited in claims 16 and 23 comprises a plurality of solenoids (i.e., coils 14 and 16 shown in Fig. 6, for example) the radial dimension and/or the axial dimension of the coil can be made smaller than in electromagnetic units comprising only one coil (i.e., coil 101 in the prior art of Fig. 20). Consequently, the size of the lens barrel may be advantageously reduced. (See the disclosure in the specification at, for example, page 18, lines 8-13.)

It is respectfully submitted that Katagiri et al (which is assigned to the same corporate entity as the present application) merely corresponds to the admitted prior art described in the

specification of the present application, and that contrary to the Examiner's assertion, Katagiri et al does not disclose, teach, or suggest a "plurality of solenoids" as according to the present invention as recited in claims 16 and 23. Instead, Katagiri et al merely discloses in Fig. 3 thereof a single solenoid 5 having a single coil 5a. And it is respectfully submitted that the structure disclosed in Katagiri et al therefore cannot achieve the reduced lens barrel size that is achieved by the structure of the present invention as recited in claims 16 and 23.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Katagiri et al does not at all disclose, teach, suggest, or otherwise render obvious the structure of the present invention as recited in claims 16 and 23.

In addition, it is respectfully pointed out that Katagiri et al also does not disclose, teach or suggest the feature of the present invention as recited in claims 21 and 28 whereby a bearing portion supports the movable plunger at an end portion thereof exposed out of the solenoid.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claims 16 and 23, as well as claims 17-22 and 24-29 respectively depending therefrom, all patentably distinguish over Katagiri et al under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103, along with already allowed claims 1-15.

Application No. 10/037,375
Response to Office Action

RE: PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT


In item 1 of the Office Action Summary the Examiner indicates that the Office Action mailed June 16, 2003 is responsive to papers filed January 4, 2002 (the filing date of the present application). However, a Preliminary Amendment was filed on April 15, 2003. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner confirm that the Preliminary Amendment was in fact entered.

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Entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,


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